UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/551
16 July 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 16 JULY 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey to you the attached letter, dated 16 July 1997, which I have received from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations. Attached to the letter is the ninth fortnightly report on the multinational protection force for Albania requested by the Security Council in its resolutions 1101 (1997) of 28 March 1997 and 1114 (1997) of 19 June 1997.

I should appreciate your bringing the text of the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Letter dated 16 July 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit the ninth report on the multinational protection force for Albania (see appendix). The report is submitted pursuant to the requirement set out in paragraph 9 of Security Council resolution 1114 (1997) of 19 June 1997, in which the Council requested the Member States participating in the force to provide periodic reports, at least every two weeks, through the Secretary-General, to the Council. The eighth such report was conveyed to you on 2 July 1997 (see S/1997/513).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and the ninth report circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Giulio TERZI
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Appendix

Ninth report to the Security Council on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 28 March 1997, the Security Council adopted resolution 1101 (1997), in paragraph 2 of which it welcomed the offer made by certain Member States to establish a temporary and limited multinational protection force to facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance and to help create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania, including those providing humanitarian assistance.

2. On 19 June 1997, the Security Council adopted resolution 1114 (1997), in paragraph 2 of which it welcomed the readiness of the countries contributing to the multinational protection force to maintain their military contingents in Albania for a limited time. In paragraph 3 of the resolution the Council welcomed the intention of the countries contributing to the force to continue to facilitate the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance and to help create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania, including those providing humanitarian assistance. It also took note of all the elements contained in the sixth report on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania, concerning, inter alia, the electoral monitoring mission of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). It decided that the operation would be limited to a period of 45 days from 28 June 1997.

3. In both resolutions, the Security Council requested the Member States participating in the multinational protection force to provide periodic reports to the Council through the Secretary-General, at least every two weeks. The first eight reports on the operation of the force were provided on 9 and 25 April, 9 and 23 May, 6, 13 and 26 June and 2 July 1997.

4. This is the ninth such report to the Security Council on the operation of the multinational protection force in Albania and the third report submitted to the Council pursuant to paragraph 9 of resolution 1114 (1997). The report refers to the events up to 15 July, and in particular to the role of the force in helping to ensure a safe and secure environment for the OSCE monitoring teams during the second round of the electoral operations on 6 July 1997 and on the further electoral operations on 13 July.

II. MULTINATIONAL PROTECTION FORCE

A. Political guidance

5. The Steering Committee, consisting of the political directors of the 11 troop-contributing countries and the Commander of the operation, continues to follow the overall situation on the ground and the full compliance of the

activities of the force with the Security Council mandate. It had meetings on 4, 9, 14, 23 and 30 April, 6, 13, 14 and 22 May, 4, 10, 20, 25 and 29 June and 2 and 15 July. On 6 and 13 July, the Steering Committee secretariat remained in permanent contact with the force headquarters from the opening of the polling stations to the conclusion of the voting operations in Albania.

6. Representatives of the following international organizations attended the meetings of the Steering Committee as observers, as appropriate: United Nations, OSCE, European Union, Western European Union and International Committee of the Red Cross.

B. Cooperation with the Albanian authorities and with international organizations

7. The force has helped to create a secure environment during the electoral process, in particular for the OSCE/ODIHR missions, in the framework of the Security Council mandate.

8. A special office was set up in Tirana at the force headquarters to follow the developments of the electoral operations in the country, in cooperation with the Albanian authorities and OSCE.

9. Although reduced in number, humanitarian missions continued in Albania during the electoral period. They resumed after the elections. The force facilitated the safe and prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance by such missions and helped to create a secure environment in accordance with the mandate provided under resolution 1114 (1997).

C. Force deployment

10. During the whole electoral process the force maintained its extended deployment virtually over the entire country, intensifying reconnaissance, patrolling and escort missions.

11. During the second round of the electoral operations, the overall deployment of the force was as follows: Austria, 111; Belgium, 14; Denmark, 57; France, 937; Greece, 766; Italy, 3,755; Portugal, one aircraft crew; Romania, 398; Slovenia, 21; Spain, 336; Turkey, 757.

12. On 6 July, the force granted protection to 58 OSCE monitoring teams in 34 electoral zones. The second round of the elections was held in 32 of these zones, while in 2 zones the first round was held, since it had not been held in the previous Sunday. The OSCE teams were deployed as follows: 2 in Berat, 3 in Diber, 15 in Durres-Kavaje-Lehza, 2 in Elbasan, 2 in Korca, 13 in Shkoder, 17 in Tirana and Kruje, 4 in Vlorë.

13. On 13 July, the force granted protection to five OSCE monitoring teams in the two electoral zones where the second round of the elections took place. Four OSCE teams were deployed in Puke and one in Fier.

III. CONCLUSIONS

14. The second round of the voting on 6 July passed relatively smoothly. Some incidents occurred without the direct involvement of the force. In some cases, however, the voting had to be suspended temporarily. At one polling station in the Shkoder area, one electoral officer was killed and two were injured when a gunman opened fire. Previously, on 4 July, the force had moved to protect OSCE monitoring teams at the headquarters of the Central Electoral Commission in Tirana when gunshots were fired around the building, leaving one dead and several wounded.

15. The OSCE Special Coordinator for the Albanian Parliamentary elections, Mrs. Catherine Lalumiére; the head of the Council of Europe parliamentary delegation, Sir Russell Johnston; and the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Javier Ruperez, stated in their final report that, in their judgement, these elections can be deemed acceptable, given the prevailing circumstances, and that they should constitute the foundation for a strong democratic system.

16. The final voting operations on 13 July took place without any incident.

17. Such positive results should be credited also to the security framework provided by the multinational protection force.